

As of 20 April 2010



A Balanced Army for a Balanced Strategy



QDR 2010 and the Army after Iraq

Purpose

This paper provides a strategic narrative that explains to both internal and external audiences how the Army will regain balance following the drawdown in Iraq; how Contingency Expeditionary Force (CEF) units in the ARFORGEN Available Pool beginning in FY12 will support the strategic objectives set forth in the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review; and the need to fully operationalize the Reserve Components as an essential and proportional part of the Army in both a CEF and Deployed Expeditionary Force (DEF) status.

Introduction

The current wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have become the longest military campaigns in our Nation's history, conflicts that span generations, and the first protracted conflicts without conscription. Against this backdrop of continued high operational demand, on February 1st the Department of Defense presented to Congress the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review. In short, the QDR lays out a strategy for rebalancing U.S. military capabilities and reforming defense processes and institutions to achieve four strategic objectives: 1. Prevail in today's wars; 2. Prevent and deter conflict; 3. Prepare to defeat adversaries and succeed in a wide range of contingencies; and 4. Preserve and enhance the All-Volunteer Force. Further, the QDR establishes priorities that determine where DOD will invest future resources.

In response to the tremendous demand for ground forces early in these wars, in 2006 the Army implemented a new force generation construct called Army Force Generation. ARFORGEN is the model the Army uses to achieve progressive levels of readiness with recurring periods of availability as both Active and Reserve Component units progress through three distinct force pools: Reset; Train/Ready; and Available. The Reset Pool is the initial ARFORGEN force pool and begins when the unit returns from a deployment or other mission. While in this pool, units conduct numerous activities to return personnel and equipment to levels sufficient to begin collective training. Active Component units are in Reset for a mandatory six months and Reserve Components for a mandatory one year to ensure all Reset tasks are accomplished to a high standard. From the Reset Pool, units progress to the Train/Ready Pool where they continue to receive new personnel, incrementally increase the level of on-hand equipment, and begin collective training, which ends with a culminating training event. Unlike the Reset Pool, there is not a mandatory period of time that units remain in the Train/Ready Pool, and units can be surged from this pool to meet contingency requirements. From the

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Train/Ready Pool, units move to the Available Pool where they either deploy as a DEF unit for rotational missions such as Iraq and Afghanistan or they remain available for CEF missions. A CEF is an AC or RC modular or task organized unit preparing to execute any contingency operation.

ARFORGEN was originally developed as a supply-driven construct for generating forces. Years of continuously high demand for Army capabilities resulted in a de facto demand-driven process that has put intense stress on our Soldiers and Families, introduced cost inefficiencies associated with providing forces quickly and expensively, and left our Nation with relatively few ground forces to respond to other crises. As the Army Chief of Staff, General George Casey, has said repeatedly, years of high demand for forces have caused the Army to become “out of balance.” With the drawdown in Iraq expected to accelerate in 2010 and to be completed at the end of 2011, the Army is restoring balance to the force. As such, the Army has an opportunity to leverage the FY 12-17 Program Objective Memorandum (POM) to institutionalize ARFORGEN as a supply-based force generation construct; one that is best suited to achieve the QDR’s four strategic objectives and to systemically build a “balanced Army for a balanced strategy” that is relevant to the 21st Century.

General Casey describes that future Army as consisting of a versatile mix of tailorable and networked Active and Reserve Component organizations, operating on a rotational cycle, to provide a sustained flow of trained and ready forces for full spectrum operations and to hedge against unexpected contingencies at a sustainable tempo that “preserves and enhances the All-volunteer force.” This future Army must be capable of contending with an ever evolving enemy employing dynamic combinations of conventional, irregular and terrorist capabilities.

The Mission of Contingency Expeditionary Forces in the Available Pool

With fewer forces in Iraq, the Nation will be able to mitigate the operational and strategic risk it has accrued over the past few years as a result of having relatively few forces available for requirements beyond Iraq and Afghanistan. While the Army will continue to obligate a significant portion of its operational force to the DEF for known missions such as Afghanistan or defense support to civil authorities, with the drawdown in Iraq, it will soon have more forces available for CEF missions.

CEF units are available for emerging contingency requirements and for Combatant Commander training and engagement requirements. Because there simply has not been enough units to meet all requirements in recent years, lesser requirements have often gone unfilled or are under-resourced. Consequently, the Nation’s ability to shape the operational and strategic environments has been diminished. A larger number of

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CEF forces in the Available Pool for contingencies and other requirements will enable

our Nation to better achieve the QDR strategic objectives:

*** *Prevail in Today's Wars.*** In the years since 9/11, the Combatant Commands have had to contend with a changing array of units available for contingency operations – such as the defense of South Korea or providing support to civil authorities during catastrophic events in the homeland – based on when they returned from deployments to Iraq or Afghanistan. The result was additional operational and strategic risk. However, with more CEF forces in the Available Pool, the Army will be able to allocate specific Army units from all components to war plans or contingency requirements on a consistent and enduring basis.

*** *Prevent and Deter Conflict.*** Consistent with the QDR's goal of "building the security capacity of partner states," additional CEF forces in the Available Pool will support the Combatant Commanders' Theater Security Cooperation programs, such as Partnership for Peace, and major coalition training events like Operation Bright Star. These engagements – which have been significantly under-resourced in previous years because of commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan – are preventative in nature and help our Nation to mitigate risk by building partnerships and deterring potential conflict.

*** *Defeat Adversaries and Succeed in a Wide Range of Conflicts.*** More CEF forces in the Available Pool will also provide our Nation with the operational depth and strategic flexibility to respond to crises across the spectrum of conflict. Operational depth refers to the Army's ability, internally, to accomplish current missions while still having enough forces – with the requisite capabilities – to respond to contingencies or other new missions. Strategic flexibility refers to the Nation's ability to meet military requirements while also having forces available to provide a range of options in responding to contingencies or other operations. Clearly, the last eight years of war have made the Army a premier counter-insurgency force, but this singular focus has degraded expertise in other skills. Today's superior counter-insurgency force is less proficient in conducting high-end military operations – such as those needed to defeat major conventional forces. Further, more CEF forces in the Available Pool will give the Army the ability to balance the agility and responsiveness that comes with being expeditionary with the endurance and adaptability that comes with being a campaign capable force. As part of this effort, the Army has embraced full-spectrum operations as its capstone operational concept, and is taking measures to restore expeditionary skills that have eroded over the past eight years. This includes Joint Forcible Entry capabilities such as airborne insertion of troops and equipment. Further, more CEF forces in the Available Pool will also enable the Army to support internal requirements, such as major training events and operational testing of new equipment and

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organizations. These requirements are essential to the continued development of the Army's doctrine and capabilities.

*** Preserve and Enhance the All-Volunteer Force.** With more CEF forces in the Available Pool, the Army will also be able to achieve sustainable rotation rates meaning Soldiers and units will experience significantly more "dwell" – the period of time at home or when not deployed – based on projected requirements. As part of the overall effort to restore balance to the Army, General Casey has articulated his desire to institutionalize ARFORGEN as a supply-based rotational model. The supply-based construct is predicated upon 1:2 and 1:4 ratios, deployed time versus not-deployed time – for the Active and Reserve Component, respectively. For an Army that is anticipating continued high demand for its forces, a supply-based approach signals the beginning of predictable rotational cycles designed to make force packages available at predetermined times during three-year and five-year cycles for the Active and Reserve Components respectively. In his October 2009 *Green Book* article, the CSA described this Available Pool force package as consisting of one corps headquarters, five division headquarters, 20 brigade combat teams (BCTs), and approximately 90,000 Soldiers in enabling units required to support these formations and stated his intention to implement this strategy in FY12. This force package totals approximately 170,000 Soldiers, of which 60,000 would come from the Reserve Components. A similar distribution of capabilities will exist in the Reset and Train-Ready Pools of ARFORGEN, and each of these force packages will progress through the ARFORGEN model on a cyclical basis. These force packages will provide the Nation with increased strategic flexibility and greater operational depth – such as the ability to pull or surge forces from the Train/Ready Pool earlier than planned.

Fully Operationalizing The Reserve Components

Fully operationalizing the Reserve Components is essential to increasing operational depth and strategic flexibility and the compelling business case has both a quantitative and qualitative component. According to the QDR, a fully operationalized Reserve Component is essential to "preserve(ing) and enhance(ing) the force by ensuring sufficient aggregate capacity to accomplish these objectives at sustainable rotation rates." This is the essence of the quantitative argument. In an effort to meet demand, Congress has incrementally grown the Active Component of the Army from 482,000 on September 11, 2001, to 569,000 today. This, coupled with the now discontinued Stop-Loss program which kept about 12,000 more Soldiers in the force, has not provided enough manpower. As a result, there are some 90,000 Soldiers from the Army National Guard and Army Reserve currently serving on active duty.

To fully implement the CSA's vision of a supply-based ARFORGEN construct, we must institutionalize recurrent, assured, and predictable access to the 60,000 Reserve

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Component Soldiers that are envisioned to be part of this force package. Further, we must maintain a proportional amount of Reserve Component units in the Available Pool. This is not a matter of choice, or simply a case of “doing the right thing.” Rather, it is clearly a matter of necessity and institutional design. Today, the Reserve Component is such a vital, integrated part of the total Army, that going to war – or even conducting a peacetime operation such as Haiti – is impossible because many of the needed units do not exist in the Active Component or their numbers are too small to meet requirements.

To achieve desirable and sustainable dwell versus deployed ratios for the Active Component, the Army must sustain inclusion of the Reserve Component within the ARFORGEN process. Further, maintaining a robust and ready Reserve Component within ARFORGEN provides maximum readiness at an affordable cost. From a cost perspective, a Soldier of the Army Reserve or Army National Guard costs approximately one-third as much as a Soldier from the Active Component; hence it makes fiscal sense to maintain a proportional part of this force package from the Reserve Component.

As asserted above, there are also qualitative advantages to operationalizing the Reserve Component. Under the Cold War strategic reserve paradigm, Reserve Component units were maintained at low levels of readiness and then provided significant additional resources as a crisis evolved. For example, the start-up cost for Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom have been significant – over the past eight years, the Nation has spent approximately \$20 billion on equipping Guard and Reserve units. Can we afford to allow these gains to be lost should we return to the strategic reserve model? To some, it may seem that returning the Reserve Component to its Cold War role as the strategic reserve will yield savings, albeit over the short term. It will, however, ultimately cost the Nation much more and will squander what today is widely recognized as a national treasure – a seasoned, combat-capable Army National Guard and Army Reserve not seen since the end of World War II.

As part of this argument, we must consider the positive impact on individual and unit proficiency – and thus readiness – that occurs when Reserve Component units deploy and accrue the experiential benefits that only real-world, operational deployments can provide. Last, one can also make the case that by ensuring we keep Reserve Component units as a proportional part of the Available Pool, we ensure that our Nation does not go to war without “hometown America” and maintains and preserves the Citizen-Soldier ethos. This has a quality that is priceless.

In spite of these manifest qualities, some may be reluctant to underwrite the costs of fully operationalizing the Reserve Component. The cost is substantial, but one that is well worth the Nation’s continued investment to solidify the tremendous gains in capability that we have achieved since 9-11. In light of the current and future fiscal environment, the question we should ask ourselves is not, “should we do this,” rather “can we afford not to do it?” Early Army estimates indicated that it would cost

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approximately \$24 billion to implement the remaining improvements necessary to fully operationalize the Reserve Component. This significant estimate was due primarily to personnel costs and, to a lesser degree, the cost of additional annual training days. However, that cost can be reduced – within an acceptable level of risk – to approximately \$9.8 billion by funding RC full-time support personnel at 72% of the total requirement, and funding approximately 15 additional days of annual training (AT) for RC units in the Available Pool. By spreading this cost over the five years of the FY 12 – 16 POM – about \$1.5 billion per each year – the Army can achieve lasting change affordably and in a way that fundamentally further improves Reserve Component capability. Making this commitment now – as part of the FY 12-17 POM submission – is critical to the Army's efforts to fully operationalize the Reserve Component as an enduring return on the Nation's substantial investment.

Conclusion

The Army is at a strategic inflection point – a point in time at which our great institution must either transform itself or risk becoming less relevant – due to the requirement to operate in an environment of persistent conflict against a hybrid threat. After years of operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere, the Army remains a force under stress. But with the on-going drawdown in Iraq, dwell time is increasing and more forces are becoming available as CEF units. With more CEF units, our Nation regains the capacity to reduce risk and better shape the operational and strategic environments. Further, against the backdrop of the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review, the Army has the opportunity to institutionalize ARFORGEN as a supply-based force generation construct. By leveraging the FY 2012-17 POM, the Army can best posture the force to provide increased operational depth and strategic flexibility, and to achieve the QDR's four strategic objectives. The RC remains an essential part of each of these efforts, from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective. Through exceptional levels of funding and the experience of eight years of combat operations, we cannot afford to surrender the gains of the past few years by returning the Reserve Component to its Cold War role of the strategic reserve. In today's operational and strategic environments, we need a fully operationalized Reserve Component that has increased levels of readiness throughout the ARFORGEN force pools, has predictable, recurring capability to respond to homeland defense requirements; provides operational depth; restores strategic flexibility; preserves the quality of the All-Volunteer Force across the components; and sustains the critical linkage to the Citizen-Soldier ethos.

This paper was prepared by the US Army Forces Command Public Affairs Office on behalf of the Commanding General. Please direct all questions to the FORSCOM Chief of Public Affairs, COL Dan Baggio by telephone at 404-464-5750 or email to daniel.baggio@us.army.mil.